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Input from the fourth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat hereby transmits the input from the fourth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, held in Dakar from 2 to 4 May 2018, to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

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Summary and key messages of the fourth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

[Original: English and French]

I. Introduction

1. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), together with the Government of Senegal and in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, convened the fourth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which was held in Dakar from 2 to 4 May 2018, in preparation for the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development, to be held in New York from 9 to 18 July 2018.

2. The Regional Forum is an intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder platform to review progress, share experiences and lessons learned and build a consensus on recommendations in the form of key messages to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the goals contained in Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. These messages serve as Africa's collective regional input to the annual high-level political forum.

3. The Regional Forum was attended by 457 participants, comprising high-level representatives of Governments of 40 ECA member States, intergovernmental bodies, major groups and other stakeholders, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, and other international organizations.

4. Section II presents a summary of presentations, discussions held and key messages arising from the Regional Forum.

II. Summary and key messages

5. The fourth session of the Regional Forum was held on the theme "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies", in line with that of the 2018 high-level political forum. An in-depth review was carried out of selected Sustainable Development Goals for the high-level political forum, along with Goal 17 and the corresponding goals contained in Agenda 2063 of the African Union, under the following subthemes:

(a) Clean water and sanitation;

(b) Affordable and clean energy;

(c) Sustainable cities and communities;

(d) Responsible consumption and production;

(e) Life on land;

(f) Strengthening the means of implementation and the partnership for sustainable development.

6. Side events held on the margins of the Regional Forum enriched the proceedings of its main session. Among those events were an expert group meeting of selected voluntary national review countries and those countries taking the lead in the implementation of Agenda 2063, and a preparatory and capacity development workshop for major groups and other stakeholders in Africa.

7. The Opening Session was moderated by the Director of the Special Initiatives Division of ECA, Fatima Denton. The Prime Minister of Senegal, Mahammed Boun Abdallah Dionne, officiated at the opening of the Forum, which was also addressed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, Mohammed Ibn Chambas, the United Nations Resident Coordinator for Senegal, Priya Gajraj, and the Chair of the outgoing Bureau of the Forum, Gervais Meatchi Tchaou.

8. The Prime Minister of Senegal highlighted the relevance of the cluster of Sustainable Development Goals to be reviewed in-depth during the session, stressing that sustainable choices must be the bed rock of all development programmes and activities. The Government of Senegal is committed to sustainable development and has adopted Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is a signatory to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The country is rolling out a programme to promote green cities and increasing its use of solar energy.

9. Mr. Chambas mentioned that the theme of the Regional Forum mattered to Africa for many reasons. He said that countries need to increase the pace and scale of implementation of the agendas. In that regard, he called upon countries to keep under regular review their policies and implementation arrangements to match the ambitions and ideals of both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063; enhance concerted and collective action at the subregional and regional levels; and strengthen and develop home-grown innovative financing mechanisms, such as that epitomized by the signing of the agreement on the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.

10. Ms. Gajraj highlighted development challenges facing Africa, namely poverty, inequality, climate change and terrorism. She emphasized the importance of African societies being resilient and sustainable. Building resilience and having access to technology will promote shared prosperity and decent lives for African communities.

11. Mr. Meatchi said that countries must work together, taking into account areas of convergence and complementarity, without obscuring the specificities among them related to the sizes of their economies. He also stressed the need for coordination among countries.

12. The main session following the opening of the Forum featured a high-level policy dialogue on the theme and plenary presentations and discussions on the progress made at the regional and subregional levels towards the achievement of the selected goals. There was a peer learning round table, during which participants shared solutions, good practices and lessons learned from voluntary national reviews and in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Through parallel meetings on subthemes, participants conducted an in-depth review of the progress made towards the achievement of the selected goals and the key messages.

13. Those activities allowed the Regional Forum participants to assess progress, reflect on bottlenecks and challenges and share and explore more solutions to achieve the goals, build resilience and realize lasting structural transformation and sustainable development in the region.

14. Presentations and discussions at the Regional Forum can be summarized as follows:[1]

(a) Water is critical to achieving Africa's desire for fast economic growth, which will bring into about a continent free of poverty and hunger, an aspiration that is encapsulated in the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. However, the continent lags behind in access to clean water and decent sanitation services. This has serious implications, including for the health and productivity of the people in the region and undermines their capacity to cope with various shocks. With an increasing population and demand for socioeconomic development, water resources in Africa are projected to become a source of tension, conflict, environmental degradation and vulnerability. The full and effective implementation of the African Water Vision 2025 is crucial to addressing the multiple challenges, enhancing access to water and strengthening integrated water resources management;

(b) With a 3.42 per cent rate of urban growth, the continent is projected to be predominantly urban in less than two decades. The speed and scale of urbanization, compared with other regions, not only presents opportunities for inclusive sustainable growth, but also poses challenges for African cities in planning and managing the urbanization process. Given the growing concentration of Africa's population in urban areas and the poor planning of those areas, urban centres are becoming increasingly vulnerable to disasters. An increasing number of African countries are adopting and implementing national disaster risk reduction strategies. In 2016, 30 African countries adopted or were implementing such strategies, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Overall, the effective achievement of Goal 11, the New Urban Agenda adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and regional urban commitments, specifically under aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063, are critical to ensuring that urbanization becomes a driver of Africa's transformation, prosperity and improved well-being;

(c) African countries remain the most vulnerable to the impact of climate change. In the context of the selected Sustainable Development Goals, for example, it is projected that, by 2025, water availability in 9 countries, mainly in East and Southern Africa, will be less than 1,000 m^3 per person annually; 12 countries will be limited to 1,000–1,700 m^3 per person annually; and the population at risk of water stress could rise to 460 million people, mainly in West Africa;

(d) While countries in North Africa have attained nearly universal access to electricity and clean cooking, and a few countries in the rest of Africa are making good progress towards achieving universal access by 2030, most of the continent is unlikely to achieve Goal 7 under existing policies and commitments. Owing to future projected population growth in Africa, from 1.3 billion people in 2017 to 1.7 billion in 2030, almost the same number of people (590 million) are likely to be without access to electricity in 2030 as in 2016. For those who have access to electricity in sub-Saharan Africa today, the average per capita consumption remains the lowest in the world. The number of people without access to clean cooking has continued to increase, reaching 846 million in 2015. Biomass continues to play an important role in the energy transformation agenda in Africa. On the basis of current policies and commitments, the number of people without access to clean cooking will reach 900 million by 2030. Renewable electricity capacity exceeded 38 GW in 2016 (23 per cent of the total), driven mainly by developments in using wind, solar, geothermal and large-scale hydropower resources. Energy intensity remains high (6.0 MJ/USD

[1] The sources of data in the present summary and key message can be found in the background reports on the subthemes of the Regional Forum. The reports are available from the Forum website: https://www.uneca.org/arfsd2018.

in 2014), however, largely as a result of an overreliance on inefficient biomass and weak energy efficiency policies and programmes. To ensure the achievement of Goal 7 in Africa by 2030, investment of approximately $34.2 billion ($32.5 billion for electricity access and $1.7 billion for clean cooking) will be needed annually;

(e) Land, water, forests and biodiversity make multifaceted contributions to resilience and sustainable development. They are indeed a foundation for reducing vulnerability to natural hazards and for coping with social and economic shocks. More than 62 per cent of the population in Africa depends directly on ecosystem services for food, water, energy, health and livelihood needs. Those resources, however, are under serious threat from high rates of degradation and loss. For example, more than 500,000 km^2 of land in the region are known to be already degraded. This is occurring amid the shrinkage of per capita landholdings in the region. Achieving land degradation neutrality and the sustainable management and use of forests and biodiversity should be prioritized in national development planning and budgeting;

(f) Africa's rapidly growing population is expected to double to 2.5 billion by 2050 and half of its population will live in urban areas by 2035, which, combined with rising per capita consumption, will escalate requirements for employment, food, water, energy and shelter. That in turn will increase pressure on water, land, forests and biodiversity in the region. Achieving sustainable consumption and production patterns, including a step change in investment in resource-efficient and cleaner production, will thus be indispensable to achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals and for sustainable development in the region. African countries are making important contributions to the global 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns through the implementation of the African 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Productions Patterns, approved by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in 2005. Shifting to green technologies on the basis of green economy strategies can contribute to reducing waste generation and associated pollution, especially of air, land and water, by manufacturing and industry;

(g) The Regional Forum was held against the backdrop of African countries coming together in March 2018 to launch the African Continental Free Trade Area. To date, 44 of the 55 African Union Heads of State and Government have signed the agreement, which, once in force, will make Africa the largest trade zone in the world. It will increase intra-African trade by 52 per cent by the year 2022. It will also give momentum to regional integration and catalyze joint and concerted efforts to tackle a wide range of issues that are critical to placing the people of Africa on a path to living in sustainable and resilient societies. The agreement will contribute to insulating the region from shocks associated with huge fluctuations in the mostly degrading global prices of Africa's exports, thereby stabilizing revenue for most countries on the continent. It will help to strengthen regional infrastructure, including by boosting energy supply. Forest and biodiversity conservation will benefit through the strengthening of regional approaches and cross-border initiatives to combat ills such as poaching and the illegal trade in wildlife. Countries therefore need to fast-track the national ratification of the agreement to pave the way for its coming into force.

15. Below are some of the key messages on the theme and subthemes of the Regional Forum, considering the challenges, progress and actions required to step up implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. These messages will constitute Africa's regional input to the 2018 high-level political forum and are intended to be used for policy dialogue, policymaking and implementation at the national, regional and global levels towards the realization of the goals set out in both agendas.

A. Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies

16. **Resilient structural transformation in Africa, in line with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, requires integrated strategies and approaches.** Such approaches should mainstream and prioritize climate change-proofing, disaster risk reduction and the value of natural capital in key national development frameworks, including strategies, plans and budgets. In that regard, integrating green and low carbon growth into such frameworks is important.

17. **The momentum to ensure climate change adaptation and mitigation should be increased alongside the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.** The implementation of nationally determined contributions should therefore be integrated and prioritized in a joint manner with policies and programmes to achieve the Goals.

18. **Effective land use and spatial planning policies, backed by the legislation and governance mechanisms required, are essential** to ensuring that the evolving urban form of Africa's growing cities is sustainable and resilient. Curbing urban sprawl is a core priority in that regard, given the impact of the rising costs of service and infrastructure provision and dependence on car-based travel, along with limited access to transport (and thus to social and economic opportunities) and threats to agricultural land and ecosystems. Within cities, the provision of public spaces is a core element in ensuring inclusive urbanization, improved productivity and the stable economic value of urban land.

19. The African Continental Free Trade Area is a powerful tool for mobilizing resources to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to build inclusive and resilient societies in the region. Countries therefore need to fast-track national ratification of the agreement to pave the way for its coming into force.

B. Clean water and sanitation

20. **African countries need to invest more in providing potable water access points in urban and rural communities, improved sanitation facilities to reduce open defecation, and in ensuring appropriate waste management.** Lack of investment in clean water and appropriate sanitation will increase the burden posed by poor health, thus slowing the pace of social and economic development. In order to achieve universal access to safe water and hygiene and sanitation services, it is crucial to address the challenges posed by increasing water pollution owing to an exponential rise in informal settlements in cities and poor urban planning; open defecation owing to a lack of sanitation facilities; and the indiscriminate dumping of untreated sewage and waste into bodies of water.

21. **Ensuring the conservation and integrity of water catchment ecosystems is central to maintaining the stability of the hydrological cycle and crucial to guaranteeing steady stream flow in transboundary water resources.** The stabilization of mountains and forest ecosystems, which serve as water towers, ensures a constant supply of water to both upstream and downstream countries and strengthen cooperation on transboundary water systems among riparian States.

22. **Investing more in both soft and hard climate-proofed water infrastructure will ensure a sustained water supply, enhance adaptation to seasonal variability in precipitation and build resilience to climate change-induced impacts, including slow-onset impacts.**

23. **African countries need to strengthen collaboration and sharing of experiences to ensure sustainable water resources management.**

24. **Improved access to appropriate technologies, innovative financing mechanisms and enhanced capacity in the water sector are essential for Africa to reach a new frontier of development** that includes the exploitation of the blue and green economies and the full implementation of the Paris Agreement. To that end, strengthened North-South and South-South cooperation in facilitating technology access and transfer and capacity-building will be required.

25. **There is a need to strengthen the capacity of African countries in monitoring, evaluating and reporting on progress made to increase access to safe drinking water, hygiene and sanitation.** The management and monitoring of water-related ecosystems are also paramount. It is therefore essential to increase data collection, analysis and sharing and to produce accurate and reliable information to ensure that there are effective policies, plans and programmes to bring about universal water access in Africa.

26. **Governments should prioritize investment in sanitation and hygiene by pursuing initiatives that keep girls in schools**, including by providing access to sanitation facilities for better menstrual hygiene management.

27. **The effective inclusion of young people, women, people living with disabilities, indigenous communities and all marginalized groups in decision-making is essential to the full achievement of access to water and sanitation.**

28. **Investments must be prioritized towards water and sanitation access, as well as climate information services, to enhance the resilience of societies to the impact of floods and droughts, which are critical to ending hunger and poverty and to achieving sustainable development.**

C. Affordable and clean energy

29. **Given the policies that are currently in place, it is unlikely that access to affordable and clean energy for all will be achieved in Africa by 2030.** Governments should therefore hasten and facilitate investment in diversified and secure clean energy technologies to ensure access to energy. Doing so will require that countries receive assistance in putting in place coherent policies and an enabling regulatory environment to mobilize the investment necessary, in particular from the private sector and domestic resources, in order to capitalize on falling technology costs for renewable energy. Countries should also revise existing incentive schemes to ensure that subsidies are targeted and optimized with a view to benefiting the poor and promoting the participation of young people and women in the productive use of energy.

30. **Although a few countries have made significant progress in electrification, less progress has been made with respect to clean cooking and increasing the share of modern renewables in the overall energy supply.** Peer learning and the sharing of good practices and experiences among countries in electrification (both grid and off-grid systems), clean cooking, renewable energy and energy efficiency programmes, including innovative business models and instruments, should be promoted. Coordination of the various regional and subregional programmes on energy access also needs to be strengthened to enhance synergies and the sharing of experiences.

31. **It is crucial to address data gaps and reliability, especially with regard to biomass, to better inform the tracking of progress and investment planning.** Countries need to develop greater capacity to collect and analyze energy data, harmonize data-collection methodologies and strengthen existing data-collection

systems in order to better determine and follow up on the impact that lack of access to affordable and clean energy has on various social groups, disaggregated by gender.

32. **Governments should systematically prioritize and capitalize on quick wins in energy efficiency programmes in all sectors**, including with respect to clean cooking, urbanization, industrialization, construction, transportation and power generation, transmission and distribution.

33. **Countries should promote national investments in strengthening the grid for greater efficiency and the increased penetration of variable renewable power and to promote cross-border connectivity to accelerate access to electricity through optimized generation where and when resource potential is highest and optimized consumption where and when demand is greatest.**

34. **Skills development, both soft and hard, should be at the centre of interventions to promote and accelerate energy access, thereby ensuring its sustainability.** Countries should identify and prioritize their capacity needs and put in place the investment and frameworks needed to develop in-country human and institutional capacities to undertake energy planning and management, bring about greater engagement with the private sector; expand the use of clean cooking technologies and create relevant business models. Such capacity development efforts should prioritize young people and gender participation and outcomes.

35. **Climate and disaster resilience should be fully integrated into the planning and implementation of energy infrastructure and investment.** This is especially important for hydropower systems, which are at risk from climate change and variability.

36. **It is important that Governments promote local content enhancement throughout the entire renewable energy value chain as a catalyst for the longer-term enhanced deployment of renewables with a view to expanding the socioeconomic benefits.** Particular efforts should be made to promote endogenous knowledge and systems for clean energy development and use. It is crucial to accelerate efforts to encourage innovation in energy services and promote collaborative research and development at the regional level.

37. **It is important for sustainability and impact that deployed clean energy technologies meet global standards and are fit for purpose.** Countries should put in place policies and regulatory frameworks to ensure that deployed technologies meet high standards and that energy project developers fulfil their corporate social responsibilities.

D. Sustainable cities and communities

38. **Urbanization is a multidimensional enabler of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.** Safe, resilient and sustainable cities are crucial to ensuring that urbanization is not only a driver of sustainability, but that it also plays a role in the achievement of many other Sustainable Development Goals, including those relating to poverty and inequality, economic growth and climate change. Planning and managing cities efficiently from a human rights perspective should therefore be a priority to achieve broader development that is socially inclusive, economically productive and environmentally sustainable.

39. **A strategic urban perspective in line with national development planning is an imperative.** Given its implications for overall growth and transformation, more efforts need to be undertaken to increase awareness to ensure that urbanization is integrated into national development planning from a strategic and multi-sectoral perspective that is linked to socioeconomic and sector priorities, policies and

strategies. This will ensure policy coherence of the urban and spatial dimension within the overall socioeconomic development context. In addition, given the predominantly rural population and agriculture-led economies of Africa, it is important to emphasize rural-urban linkages in policies, strategies and programmes at regional, national and local levels. A sectoral and silo approach to urbanization will not fully unleash the proven potential of urbanization to promote inclusive social and economic prosperity.

40. **Member States should leverage opportunities arising from integrated territorial development in addition to rural-urban linkages to promote sustainable rural-urban transitions and structural transformation that generate decent jobs to benefit urban and rural populations.**

41. **While urbanization requires significant financial investment in long-term planning, capacity-building and coordination, doing nothing is not an option.** Density can lower the per-capita costs of services and infrastructure, but it does not make urbanization cheap. Cities require massive public and private investments to accommodate a rapidly rising population in a compact environment. The return on urban investment is also high, especially when investment occurs within a good planning framework, is aligned with private sector investment and is paired with well-functioning revenue and land value capture tools.

42. **African countries must take advantage of the ongoing urban transition.** African cities are growing fast, but that does not make them productive. Productive cities arise when a high density of economic activities is arranged in a well laid-out and well-managed spatial economy. The prevalent phenomena of slums and informality in African cities are indicative of both the resilience and creative energy of the people and of the loss of productive opportunities owing to weak planning and investment in advance of urban growth. Nevertheless, countries can take advantage of the urban transition that is underway. Doing so will require urgent short-term and thoughtful long-term actions that are coordinated under broader national development frameworks. South-South cooperation, especially among African cities, should be further enhanced to facilitate the sharing of experiences and lessons learned at all levels, including in terms of urban planning and management, financing, capacity-building and inclusive governance.

43. **The strategic implementation of Goal 11 requires that effective national urban policies be adopted and implemented by all member States in consultation with all stakeholders**, in particular local authorities, civil society, the private sector and academia.

44. **Inclusive and efficient land management is a must.** Member States should also ensure that national, regional and municipal land use planning incorporates economic, social and environmental criteria, with a special focus on biodiversity and ecosystem protection.

45. **Strategic implementation, follow-up and reporting require robust data and statistics at the national, local and city levels.** The persistence of data paucity and insufficiently defined methodologies for measuring the economic, social and environmental dimensions of urbanization warrant the investment of more resources in data collection, disaggregation and analysis and in the dissemination of reliable data to enable effective monitoring of and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals.

46. **Climate change and disaster risk-informed urbanization policies, strategies and investments, including disaster risk-informed national and local development strategies and plans, are critical to the creation of inclusive,**

sustainable, safe and resilient cities and human settlements. Among the major challenges is the need to promote green public spaces and urban forestry.

47. **The restoration, protection and conservation of nature within and beyond cities will ensure that urban areas continue to enjoy essential ecosystem services, including fresh water and food, in a sustainable manner and without negative effects.**

48. **Studies and research need to be undertaken to better grasp the multidimensional nature of urbanization**, including from cultural, historical, political, economic, sociological and environmental perspectives.

49. **The effective implementation of Goal 11 requires consultation and coordinated efforts among multiple stakeholders**, including line ministries from all sectors, local authorities, metropolitan authorities, national statistics offices, the private sector, academia and civil society.

50. **Capacity-building training to ensure sustainable urban planning, management and financing should be provided to all major players**, especially city technical staff, local authorities and national planners, among others.

51. **Major efforts should be made to enhance the process of decentralization undertaken in many African countries by increasing access to national resources, enhancing the potential of resource generation at the local and city levels, including through the issuance of bonds, the involvement of the diaspora and land value capture, among others. Countries need to create safe public spaces in cities, including by ensuring access to affordable means of transportation, including for women and girls and for persons with disabilities in all their diversity.** Such public spaces must be free from harassment and other forms of sexual violence towards all people, especially women and girls, regardless of migrant status.

52. **To address population growth in African cities, Governments should increase access to family planning, in line with the Maputo Plan of Action for the Operationalization of the Continental Policy Framework for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights 2016–2030, and the Catalytic Framework to End AIDS and Tuberculosis and Eliminate Malaria in Africa by 2030.**

E. Responsible consumption and production

53. **Sustainable development is threatened by unsustainable consumption and production patterns and practices.** Efforts to develop are undermined when resources are not used responsibly, resulting in the emergence of environmental challenges and the persistence of existing challenges, as is being experienced globally. This situation calls for innovative solutions, including enabling policies, innovative businesses and strategic partnerships, to promote responsible consumption and production and to address the threats to the well-being of our planet. There is therefore a need for coordinated policies, strategies and action to address the threats to sustainable development as we move towards responsible consumption and production as a means to transition to a green economy in Africa.

54. **Member States should introduce or strengthen the implementation of their sustainable consumption and production strategies, in particular in the thematic areas not yet exploited or currently underexploited.** Such thematic areas include resource efficiency and cleaner production, sustainable lifestyles, strategic investment in resource-efficient cities, sustainable public procurement and sustainable tourism. There is a need to strengthen existing institutional frameworks in that regard, ideally at both the national and supranational levels.

55. **The safeguarding and implementation of responsible management of Africa's natural resources, on which most growth is predicated, should remain a priority.** Resource efficiency to reduce waste in production and consumption and maintaining the structure and functions of ecosystems should be at the core of a shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns. A green economy policy framework will impose costs on inefficient production and consumption practices and provide incentives for the private sector to change its operations in ways that will contribute to sustainable development.

56. **The food lost in Africa could feed the millions of people who are hungry or malnourished. Saving just one quarter of the food lost or wasted globally could also end hunger in the world.** To achieve that target, several interventions are needed at various levels, especially in the agricultural production and post-harvest handling stages. Governments need to conduct comprehensive evaluations, with the ultimate goal of reducing inefficiency in food supply chains. They should also be proactive in bridging the huge policy deficiencies related to influencing the underlying behaviours that are the primary drivers of unsustainable consumption and production.

57. **Many countries have intensified their efforts to reduce hazardous waste generation, to promote the environmentally sound management of such waste, to strengthen restrictions on its transboundary movement, in accordance with principles of environmentally sound management, and to increase transparency in the regulatory systems permitting such movement.** Nevertheless, countries should strengthen their scientific capacity to ascertain the hazardous potential of waste and materials that are transferred or exchanged within their jurisdictions.

58. **There is also a need to accelerate the implementation of the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes within Africa.** The success of African and global conventions on the control of transboundary movement and management of hazardous waste depends on the concerted efforts of and collaboration among all States, not only those that are adversely affected by such waste. Countries should therefore adopt national policies and strategies for dealing with hazardous waste and for engaging with other member States in that regard.

59. **The linking of sustainable consumption and production patterns with most of the other Sustainable Development Goals requires that specific attention be placed on national capacity development and on data generation, data utilization and data sharing to adequately highlight the various benefits to African countries of mainstreaming sustainable consumption and production patterns into their national statistics and reporting frameworks.** Specific focus needs to be placed on strengthening institutions to provide reliable and up-to-date environmental data, given that the availability of disaggregated environmental data will allow member States to substantively report on, advocate and decide upon ways to reframe economic policies and practices around sustainable consumption and production patterns at the macroeconomic and sectoral levels.

60. **The shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns will require the massive use by member States of an integrated approach that necessitates, among other things, interministerial coordination and the involvement of non-traditional actors.** That will translate the multifaceted dimension of sustainable consumption and production patterns into relevant national development outcomes through engagement in strategic activities that support sustainable consumption and production patterns on various fronts, including pricing, the protection of intellectual property rights and the provision of goods and services within regions and across boundaries. The understanding of those actors of how sustainability can help to achieve development goals needs to be significantly improved so that they can offer

the budgetary and national policy support required to enable the broader implementation of sustainable consumption and production patterns in a cross-government and multi-ministerial manner.

61. **Governments must develop and implement programmes for skills development at all levels of education that support sustainable consumption and production and green industrialization.** They should also create a conducive environment that enhances and supports the initiatives of non-State actors, including the private sector, labour, local communities and civil society, on sustainable consumption and production. In addition, the transfer of clean technologies and the promotion of centres focused on clean development should be priority.

F. Life on land

62. **Investment to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 15 will contribute to the realization of all the other goals set out in the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.** This is because the attainment of those goals is inseparably linked to the existence, productivity and sustainability of life on land. Accordingly, there is an urgent need for African countries, multilateral and bilateral partners and other relevant stakeholders to substantially increase investment to take action on the ground to combat land degradation, support large-scale ecosystem restoration and enhance the productivity and resilience of all types of ecosystems and genetic resources in Africa. Such actions should include measures to further strengthen ongoing efforts to end poaching and illicit trafficking of wildlife.

63. **Achieving the ambition to sustainably manage land, forests and biodiversity, in line with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, requires that African Governments translate high-level policies and strategic goals into tangible national actions and outcomes on the ground.** This includes the accelerated implementation of related global and regional treaties and frameworks at the national, subnational and local levels. To be effective, such implementation should be undertaken through integrated and cross-sectoral approaches, in particular at the landscape level. In that regard, the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel initiative offers an opportunity to scale up ecosystem restoration and build the resilience of communities. There is also a need to develop and implement large-scale regional programmes on biodiversity and economic development, including the Security, Stability and Sustainability initiative, in the member States concerned.

64. **Funding, capacity development and technology support linked to achieving on-the-ground outcomes need to be scaled up to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, land degradation neutrality targets, ecosystem restoration, sustainable forest management programmes and other ecosystem management plans.** Doing so will benefit from the enhanced exchange of good practices, lessons learned, innovations and technologies, and will be developed with an emphasis on the input of those from the region.

65. **Tools and processes for integrating the sustainable use and management of natural capital into strategic regional, subregional and national development policies and other frameworks need to be strengthened and implemented.** Such tools are urgently needed to, in particular, integrate nature's contribution to people and economies into priority development frameworks for agricultural transformation, the expansion of trade and the development of urban centres, industries and infrastructure, including energy, water and transport infrastructure. National capital accounting initiatives, such as those already carried out by the majority of countries that are signatories to the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa, need to be scaled up and replicated in the region.

66. **It is crucial to strengthen rights and access to land resources and participative approaches to the management of land, freshwater, forests and biodiversity.** In that regard, countries need to scale up the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. It is particularly important to enhance access and participation by indigenous peoples, local communities and various groups, including women and young people. This is central to ensuring equitable benefit-sharing and that no one is left behind. Countries therefore need to strengthen their land governance, including resource tenure systems. Doing so should contribute to efforts to combat land grabbing.

67. **Lack of and poor access to data and information on land and ecosystems contribute to unbalanced reporting on progress, inadequate awareness and insufficient national policy attention to and actions for the sustainable management of these resources.** In that regard, it is vital for countries to strengthen their capacity to collect, manage and disseminate data and information on environment-related sectors as an integral priority of national statistics systems. Moreover, countries need to make use of other available information, including from national reports on global and regional obligations, and data collected by the research community, the private sector, local communities and civil society. In particular, countries need to expand the availability and use of relevant information and knowledge to inform national policymaking and implementation. Assessments conducted by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services provide a springboard for expanding the availability of such information.

68. **Countries need to strengthen their engagement with the business community to better incorporate natural capital issues into corporate policies, standards and practices to enhance conservation and the sustainable management of ecosystems.** Such engagement is necessary to expand investment in the implementation of various Sustainable Development Goals.

69. **It is necessary to work with other regions and stakeholders to develop a new and ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework.** That framework should include harmonized indicators, requirements for financial instruments, along with capacity-building and communication strategies to inform the review and updating of a number of targets under Goal 15 that are due to expire in 2020.

70. **There is a need to enhance high-level political commitment and to generate momentum to accelerate implementation in order to achieve ecosystem-related targets within the time frame that has been set and to develop a new and ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework.** To do so, a global summit at the Heads of State level needs to be convened to raise the political and economic profile of biodiversity and ecosystem services and to raise awareness of their importance in achieving the 2030 Agenda and in supporting the implementation of Agenda 2063. The fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will take place in November 2018 in Egypt, and all African countries are encouraged to actively participate at the highest level and contribute to discussions, including during the ministerial segment.

G. Strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the partnership for sustainable development

71. **National statistics offices, supported by development partners, need to strengthen their statistics development systems, data gathering and management**

plans to support the monitoring and reporting requirements of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in a harmonized and integrated manner, in particular by:

(a) Enhancing national statistics systems, including national statistics bureaus and sectoral statistics services;

(b) Enhancing the capacity of users of statistical data;

(c) Adjusting and reorienting national statistics development strategies to manage data related to the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals and the goals of Agenda 2063, including through the disaggregation of data on specific population groups (e.g., women, children, persons with disabilities and young people) so as to leave no one behind;

(d) Promoting access to financing to acquire the technologies needed to produce high-quality data.

72. **Long-term planning, policy coordination, monitoring of progress and impact evaluations are needed to identify what works in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on the continent and to address policy failures and gaps with respect to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063**, in particular by:

(a) Aligning the 2030 Agenda with Agenda 2063 at the national, sectoral, regional and local levels;

(b) Promoting inclusive planning and strengthening the participation of vulnerable groups, including women, persons with disabilities, the elderly and young people;

(c) Strengthening monitoring, assessment and reporting functions, in particular through analysis, modelling and forecasting;

(d) Promoting civilian oversight (e.g., by civil society, the media and non-governmental organizations) of the implementation of public policies.

73. **Science and technology innovation should drive inclusive and sustainable development. Special emphasis should be placed on including women and girls, young people and vulnerable groups.**

74. **Investment in research and development should be considerably increased and attention should be given to the development of climate information and services, resilient infrastructure and green industrialization capacity.**

75. **Science and technology innovation-focused partnerships among African countries are central to the achievement of the goals.** Such partnerships should focus on mobilizing and sharing knowledge and expertise and technology transfer.

76. Partnerships with the private sector to support the translation of research outputs into innovations that can be scaled up to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals should be strengthened.

77. **Technology should be harnessed to improve data collection, analysis and dissemination, as well as to promote evidence-informed policymaking.** Technology should also be used to create open digital platforms to enable citizens to have global access to information.

78. **The creation of a multi-stakeholder forum in Africa on science and technology innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, held in the margins of the annual Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, will enable African countries to build and strengthen partnerships, identify African science and technology innovation needs and gaps and assist Africa in**

coordinating its representation at the annual multi-stakeholder forum on science and technology innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals and at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

79. **The creation of an African platform for research and innovation exchange will enable the dissemination of Goal-relevant African research and innovation to Governments and citizens.** It could form the basis for linking researchers and innovators with the funding required to scale up their work. The proposed platform would showcase and share Africa's efforts to develop Goal-relevant research and innovation and could be coordinated with the Global Innovation Exchange.

80. **It is important to reaffirm that the 2030 Agenda recognizes the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.** For African countries, it is important that their different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respect for national policies and priorities be taken into consideration in relation to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals on the continent. The means of implementation, including financial assistance through continued official development assistance, remain vital. Developed countries must honour their historic obligations and responsibilities in this regard, as part of the global commitment to revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

81. **Revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development can only be fully achieved if supported by the concrete policies and actions outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda.** The full implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda is therefore critical to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets in Africa.

82. **It is important for Africa that the global community effectively address illicit financial flows and the negative consequences that arise from them.** It is estimated that $50–60 billion leaves the continent in illicit financial flows annually. Multinational corporations and other such entities, most of which are based in developed countries, should make their rightful contributions in the African countries where their revenues are generated.

83. **African countries and their development partners should ensure that adequate funding is allocated to projects and programmes for vulnerable groups.**

84. **Africa must devise additional strategies for its development while avoiding increases in its external and domestic debt.**

85. **Integrated approaches and strengthened partnerships in sustainable land, forest and biodiversity management should be pursued as an important strategy for mobilizing the means of implementation.** Financing and capacity development for implementation should be mainstreamed into innovative mechanisms, such as those to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and to promote conservation, sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries, such as the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility and the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund.

86. **Recognizing that global trade is key to achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, Governments should ensure that trade agreements are consistent with and promote commitment to gender equality, human rights obligations, the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, as well as other international and regional frameworks.**

87. **The African Continental free Trade Area must receive strong governance, financial and overall support for the innovative and effective implementation of an inclusive African Continental Free Trade Area.**

88. **Investment in the development of African markets should promote greater access for African exporters on the basis of their comparative advantage and without being burdened by subsidies in developed countries.**

89. **Gender equality and women's access to trade benefits should be promoted by systematically integrating gender analysis and human rights impact assessments into trade policies at the international, regional and national levels that recognize women's informal trade activities, their contributions and their vulnerabilities.**